



RapidOhiaDeath.org



2020 Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death Newsletter Volume 4, Issue 2

*~ E mana'o a'e ana e lei I ka lehua o
Mokaulele ~*

"A wish to wear the lehua of Mokaulele in a lei. A wish to win a maiden. Lei
symbolizes sweetheart, and lehua, a pretty girl"

From 'Olelo No'eau: Hawaiian Proverbs and Poetical Sayings, Honolulu, Hawaii: Bishop

Museum Press, 1983

This is our quarterly newsletter that was designed to update the community on current Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death (ROD) issues. If you wish to UNSUBSCRIBE, scroll down to the bottom to do so.



Research Updates

- All testing for ROD is carried out at the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) Diagnostic Lab in Hilo. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, USDA

ARS has suspended testing until further notice. If you have any ROD samples please keep them in a refrigerator, where they should be ok for 8-12 weeks. We will inform everyone once samples are being accepted again.

- In response to COVID-19 conditions, the Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death field crew has had to adjust to reduced and evolving protocols. Helicopter operations have stopped at least for April and May. Limited ground field work has continued where possible and while maintaining proper social distancing. On Kaua'i, this work has been focused on felling infected trees and assisting in entomology (beetle) research at select research sites. Kaua'i Invasive Species Committee (KISC) continues to survey key forest plots on a limited basis, and as long as non-state park trails remain open, they are also maintaining boot brush stations. All in-person outreach activities have transitioned to phone, text, email, or other forms of virtual communication at least through June 2020.
 - Our Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death entomology team continues to study the role of ambrosia beetles in the spread of the disease. As beetles bore into the sapwood of infected trees, they kick out frass—fine wood particles and beetle excrement—that can carry live fungal spores. This frass can get stuck to shoes, tools, and vehicles, and can also be blown by wind. On Kaua'i, little is known about the beetle communities, so USGS researchers have started studies to learn more. Their goals include: 1) To identify what beetle species exist on Kaua'i; 2) To identify what beetle species are attacking infected and dying 'ōhi'a on Kaua'i; and 3) To tease out answers to the question of how important it is to cover felled infected 'ōhi'a with tarps or not. Keep in mind, these beetles are super tiny—about the size of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's ear on a dime—and require the use of a hand lens to find and a microscope to identify.
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5 THINGS YOU CAN DO



1 DON'T MOVE 'ŌHI'A

Do not move 'ōhi'a wood, firewood, or posts, especially from an area known to have ROD. If you don't know where the wood is from, don't move it.

2 DON'T TRANSPORT 'ŌHI'A INTER-ISLAND

Comply with the new quarantine rule to help prevent ROD from spreading. Don't move 'ōhi'a plants, whole or parts, 'ōhi'a wood, or soil from Hawai'i island without a permit.

3 AVOID INJURING 'ŌHI'A

Wounds serve as entry points for the fungus and increase the odds that the tree will become infected and die from ROD. Avoid pruning and contact with heavy equipment wherever possible.

4 CLEAN YOUR GEAR/TOOLS

If you must work around or cut 'ōhi'a, clean tools and gear before and after use, especially when used on infected 'ōhi'a. Brush all soil off of tools and gear, then spray with 70% rubbing alcohol. Shoes and clothes should also be cleaned before and after entering forests. Wash clothes with hot water and soap.

5 WASH YOUR VEHICLE

Wash the tires and undercarriage of your vehicle with detergent and remove all soil or mud, especially after traveling from an area with ROD and/or if you have traveled off-road.

Updated March 2017

Management Tips

You Can Help Save 'Ōhi'a

- 1) **Avoid injuring 'ōhi'a.** Wounds serve as entry points for the fungus and increase the odds that the tree will become infected and die from Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death. Avoid pruning, weed-whacking, blazing trails, and stepping on roots wherever possible.
 - 2) **Clean gear and tools, including shoes and clothes,** before and after entering the forest and areas where 'ōhi'a may be present. Brush all soil off tools and gear, then spray with 70% rubbing alcohol. Wash clothes with hot soapy water and dry on high heat.
 - 3) **Wash your vehicle** with a high-pressure hose or washer if you've been off-roading or have picked up mud from driving. Clean all soil off tires--including mountain bikes and motorcycles--and your vehicle's undercarriage.
 - 4) **Don't move 'ōhi'a** wood or 'ōhi'a parts, including adjacent soil. The disease can be spread to new areas by moving plants, plant parts, and wood from infected areas to non-infected areas.
 - 5) **Keep your eyes open.** If you see 'ōhi'a with a limb or crown turning brown, take a picture and contact your local Invasive Species Committee via email or phone. Be sure to provide details on the tree's exact location. Samples of the wood must be taken by trained technicians and tested in a laboratory to confirm the presence of the ROD fungi.
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Outreach Updates

The month of April brought about some amazing events. In April, we usually celebrate Earth Day, Merrie Monarch Festival, 'Ōhi'a Lehua Day, and now this year the whole month of April was deemed Native Hawaiian Plant Month! What an amazing time of the year and with spring and the beginning of summer upon us we reflect upon our team's achievements!

During the week leading up to April 25th ('Ōhi'a Lehua Day) we had a week long session of videos and live broadcasts on our Instagram account, [@ohialife](https://www.instagram.com/ohialife). We began the week with a [video of how to make a kukui lei](#) by Ocean Dreamer (Lei La'i Studio), how to collect seed from 'ōhi'a plants by Corie Yanger (UH-CTAHR), different 'ōhi'a varieties by Dr. JB Friday (UH-CTAHR), a [video on how to grow 'ōhi'a from seed](#) by JC Watson ('Ōhi'a Legacy Initiative), endemic cocktail hour and FAQ's about native plants by Rick Barboza (Hui Kū Maoli Ola Native Hawaiian Plant Nursery), and ended the week with Lacy Lyons forest tour (Lyons Estate). To go alongside our live broadcasts and videos we provided free lei kits for pickup for those wanting to help celebrate 'Ōhi'a Lehua Day by making lei with us!

We also gave away over 300 keiki kits statewide for ages 2-8 that included all 'ōhi'a related materials including coloring books, crafts, stickers, and more! We continue to give back to the community during these challenging times, including contributing 400 'ōhi'a seed sowing kits and 2200 'ōhi'a activity books for keiki

care packages on Hawai'i Island.

On our social media accounts, we have posted a variety of new materials and opportunities for the public to get involved in celebrating 'ōhi'a! We launched a campaign requesting 'ōhi'a-inspired art to give community members a chance to be featured on our accounts. There were amazing things shared, including: artwork, poems, chants, songs, and hula. Check out our Facebook page, [@RapidOhiaDeath](#), for all of the wonderful submissions!

In May, our outreach team hosted three online 'ōhi'a-free lei-making workshops to help those wanting to make lei to celebrate Mother's Day, graduation, or other special events. Community members learned how to collect sustainably and source materials from their own yards and gardens. We have our workshop video on our [Vimeo account](#) for everyone to watch and learn!



Upcoming Events

Since we were unable to host our annual ROD symposia this year, we developed a webinar series to share advances in our understanding and management of the disease. The webinar presentations just finished this week, but we are considering hosting more, so stay tuned.

The webinars for this first series covered the following topics. We will be making

the webinar recordings available soon. If you are interested in hearing about future webinars, please email ohialove@hawaii.edu

- **ROD Distribution and Abundance on Hawai'i Island** (William Stormont, DLNR/DOFAW Hawai'i Island, and William Buckley, Big Island Invasive Species Committee)
 - **Impact of ROD on Forest Stands** (Ryan Perroy, Timo Sullivan, and Eszter Collier, SDAV lab, University of Hawai'i at Hilo)
 - **Importance of Beetles in Spreading ROD** (Kylle Roy and Robert Peck, USGS Pacific Ecosystems Research Center)
 - **Tree and Wood Treatments** (Marc Hughes, USDA Forest Service Institute of Pacific Islands Forestry)
 - **Community Member Actions to Manage ROD** (J.B. Friday, University of Hawai'i Cooperative Extension Service)
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Meet Our People

Kim Rogers

Kaua'i Invasive Species Committee (KISC) ROD Education Specialist

Since moving to Kaua'i in 1999, Kim Steutermann Rogers has worked as a freelance journalist and photographer covering conservation science efforts across the state, writing stories for numerous print and online magazines, including *Smithsonian*, *Audubon*, and *Popular Science*. She's also served as a docent at Kīlauea Point National Wildlife Refuge, monitors a large colony of Laysan albatross and wedge-tailed shearwater, and helps with bird surveys at Hanalei National Wildlife Refuge. Because she cannot seem to say, “No” and thoroughly enjoys Hawai'i's natural world, she also responds to callouts on behalf of the Kaua'i Hawaiian Monk Seal Conservation Hui and NOAA's Marine

Mammal Stranding Team, and sits on the Sanctuary Advisory Committee for NOAA's Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary. Since

November 2018, Kim has been spending more time in the forest as the Kaua'i ROD Outreach Specialist, leading seed banking initiatives, bio-sanitation training, community 'ōhi'a tree give-aways, and writing a Kaua'i quarterly newsletter. Now, like all of us, she's shifting to the virtual world, conducting online 'ōhi'a outreach for classrooms, groups, and organizations. If you'd like to schedule a or presentation with Kim, or you'd like to be added to the Kaua'i quarterly email newsletter, write Kim at saveohia@hawaii.edu.



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Our mailing address is:

University of Hawaii Komohana Research and Extension Center
875 Komohana St.
Hilo, HI 96720

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